

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An ambiguous transaction device for conducting a financial transaction for a merchant having a merchant account, the transaction device comprising:

an input component for receiving merchant identifying information that is stored separately from the ambiguous transaction device and transaction data; and

a networking component for transferring the transaction data and the merchant identifying information to an acquirer, wherein the merchant identifying information enables the acquirer to associate a merchant with the financial transaction and the transaction data enables the acquirer to execute the financial transaction.

2. The ambiguous transaction device of claim 1, wherein the ambiguous transaction device is incorporated into a point of sale device.

3. The ambiguous transaction device of claim 1, wherein the ambiguous transaction device is incorporated into an automatic teller machine.

4. The ambiguous transaction device of claim 1, wherein the transaction data comprises a financial card number.

5. The ambiguous transaction device of claim 4, wherein the financial card number is a credit card number.

6. The ambiguous transaction device of claim 1, wherein the merchant identifying information is stored in a magnetic stripe of a financial card that can be read by the ambiguous transaction device.

7. The ambiguous transaction device of claim 1, wherein the merchant identifying information is stored in a removable data storage device that can be received by the ambiguous transaction device.

8. The ambiguous transaction device of claim 6, wherein the merchant identifying information comprises at least one of a network ID, a telephone number, an IP address, or a transmission frequency.

9. A method for conducting an electronic financial transaction over a network using an ambiguous transaction device, the method comprising:

receiving a an electronic financial transaction request from the ambiguous transaction device over the network, the transaction request including merchant identifying information that is stored separately from the ambiguous transaction device and transaction data;

accessing a merchant account database having information specifying a plurality of merchant accounts, each of the plurality of merchant accounts having merchant identifying information associated therewith; and

associating the transaction with one of the plurality of merchant accounts by comparing the merchant identifying information received in the transaction request with the merchant identifying information associated with each of the plurality of merchant accounts in the merchant account database.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the ambiguous transaction device receives the merchant identifying information and the transaction information on a per transaction basis.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the merchant identifying information is stored separately on a transaction storage device and the ambiguous transaction device receives the merchant identifying information from the transaction storage device to generate the transaction request.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the transaction storage device is a financial card.
13. The method of claim 11, wherein the transaction storage device is a SIM card.
14. The method of claim 11, wherein the transaction storage device is a smart card.
15. The method of claim 9, wherein the ambiguous transaction device is a cellular telephone.
16. The method of claim 9, wherein the ambiguous transaction device is a computer.
17. The method of claim 9, wherein the ambiguous transaction device is one of a point of sale terminal and an automatic teller machine.
18. The method of claim 9, wherein at least some of the transaction data is generated by the ambiguous transaction device upon selection of a menu item from a menu on the ambiguous device.
19. The method of claim 9, wherein the ambiguous device generates at least some of the transaction data by receiving said at least some of the transaction data from a card reader.

20. The method of claim 9, wherein the transaction data comprises a credit card number, a credit card expiration date, and an amount.

21. The method of claim 9, wherein a plurality of external devices communicate with the ambiguous device through a wireless connection, each of the external devices being capable of transmitting merchant identifying information and transaction data to the ambiguous device through the wireless connection.

22. A method for conducting a financial transaction over a network using an ambiguous transaction device, the method comprising:

authorizing the establishment of a merchant account linked to a financial card, wherein the merchant account is stored in a merchant account database and merchant identifying information is associated therewith;

sending a financial transaction request from the ambiguous transaction device over the network, the transaction request including merchant identifying information and transaction data, wherein the financial transaction to be executed is associated with the merchant account by comparing the merchant identifying information included in the transaction request with the merchant identifying information associated with the merchant account in the merchant account database, and wherein the transaction data enables the execution of the financial transaction;

receiving a transaction response that indicates that the transaction has been authorized.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein the ambiguous device generates at least some of the transaction data by receiving said at least some of the transaction data from a card reader.

24. The method of claim 24, wherein the ambiguous device generates at least some of the transaction data by receiving said at least some of the transaction data from an external device.

25. A method for receiving payment in a financial transaction conducted over a GSM network using a GSM terminal, the method comprising:

receiving a transaction request from a merchant from the GSM terminal over the GSM network, the transaction including merchant identifying information and transaction data, wherein the transaction request has been generated by the GSM terminal accessing a SIM card that stores the merchant identifying information;

accessing a merchant account database specifying a plurality of merchant accounts, each of the plurality of merchant accounts having unique merchant identifying information associated therewith;

associating the transaction request with one of the plurality of merchant accounts by comparing the merchant identifying information received in the transaction request with the unique merchant identifying information associated with each of the plurality of merchant accounts; and

transmitting transaction information for transaction processing, the transaction information including at least a portion of the transaction data, thereby enabling funds to be added to the associated merchant account.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the GSM terminal is a cellular telephone.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein the financial transaction is a credit card transaction and the transaction data comprises a credit card number, a credit card expiration date, and an amount to be paid.

28. The method of claim 25, wherein the merchant identifying information is a SIM identification number.

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29. A method of conducting an electronic financial transaction in a GSM network, the method comprising:

receiving a transaction request from a GSM terminal, the transaction request including a SIM identification number, a route code, a credit card number, a credit card expiration date, and an amount to be paid;

accessing a merchant account database specifying a plurality of merchant accounts, each of the plurality of merchant accounts being uniquely identified in the merchant account database using SIM identification numbers;

associating the transaction request with one of the plurality of merchant accounts by comparing the SIM identification number included in the transaction request with the SIM identification numbers identifying the merchant accounts in the merchant account database; and

sending an response that indicates the authorization of a financial transaction.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein the transaction request further includes a pin number.

31. The method of claim 29, wherein the transaction request is routed from a home location register to a server of an acquirer that participates in the electronic financial transaction.

32. The method of claim 29, wherein the transaction request is transmitted as unstructured service data.

33. The method of claim 29, wherein the GSM terminal has a menu and at least some of the transaction request is generated by the GSM terminal upon selection of a menu item.

34. The method of claim 29, wherein the SIM identification code included in the transaction request is generated by accessing the SIM identification code from a SIM card that is removably associated with the GSM terminal, such that the merchant is capable of generating transaction requests from multiple GSM terminals by porting the SIM card to any of said multiple GSM terminals.